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**U.S. Civilian Mentorship Program: Help or Hindrance?**

**by**

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**LtCol USMC**

**A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.**

**The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.**

**Signature: \_\_\_\_\_**

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## **Contents**

Introduction	1
Discussion	2
Program Concept	5
Counter Argument	15
Conclusions and Recommendations	17
Bibliography	20

## **Abstract**

*Can a U.S. civilian mentorship program enhance the Combatant Commander's ability to establish a functional, civil society thereby marginalizing the effects of an insurgency on a newly formed government?*

The protracted war in Afghanistan has led to many methods of countering the existing insurgency through both civil and military means in order to accomplish the operational objectives. The military methods have been primarily aimed at stabilizing the existing society by gaining public support through increased local security in order to establish a standing form of representative government at the national, provincial, and community level. Much effort has been expended by the United States and its Coalition partners to win the hearts and minds of the local population in an effort to marginalize the insurgency. This paper will focus on a civil means of assisting the Combatant Commander with national stability beginning at the grass roots and community level. Specifically, it will examine the viability of a U.S. civilian mentorship program designed to educate Afghan civilians from influential community level occupations on similar U.S. occupational methods and techniques. The desired end state revolves around the reintegration of the Afghan participants back into their communal society determined to positively influence the reconstruction of their community and the operations of their local governments thereby stabilizing the Afghan society as a whole.

## **INTRODUCTION**

In order to effectively defeat an insurgency, the Combatant Commander requires access to every tool available both inside and outside of the military arm of our nation. The pure nature of this type of asymmetric warfare requires creative thought and a sense of urgency and determination to try new and viable methods necessary for success. Ultimate victory over an insurgency is not won through military might alone, but through the vital integration of the civilian sector in the reconstruction of war torn nations focused on instilling hope in the populace for a better future.

This paper will examine the viability of a U.S. civilian mentorship program aimed at stabilizing the Afghan society by allowing selected groups of Afghans to witness the functionality and freedoms of the American culture. They will be provided with the opportunity to observe a stable democracy and a civilization that is fairly governed by elected officials supervised by local, state, and federal laws. Additionally, the Afghans will be matched with American hosts having common occupational skills thereby providing a conduit for both parties to freely exchange ideas and learn the other's culture. By drawing comparisons with similar civil and military programs, parallels and commonalities will be derived in order to determine the program's viability.

The objective of a U.S. civilian mentorship program is not to provide a conduit for U.S. citizenship or asylum for Afghan civilians. On the contrary, for this program to be effective, the mentored participants must return to Afghanistan upon completion. The overriding objective is to support the combatant commander with an educational program designed to complement the operational objectives aimed at winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. The desired end state is that each return with a strong desire to positively

change their society through a unified effort to establish the grass roots influence necessary to shape and strengthen their community governments.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Combatant Commander should have access to every tool available in order to succeed in war. When fighting an insurgency conflict, alternate ways and means should be explored to achieve a victorious end simply due to the asymmetric nature of the conflict. The goals of most insurgencies are typically aimed at attaining a certain level of legitimacy for a particular cause and/or instituting a new type of government with a common political agenda. The fuel for most insurgencies lies in the country's economic unrest and/or social distrust of the standing governmental institution. However, an essential element in attaining victory for the insurgency is usually found in the support generated from the population. This support is typically achieved by some form of coercion whether through physical threats, propaganda, or the people simply side with the insurgency because of common beliefs.

The United States' primary security interests in Afghanistan lie in denying terrorist a safe haven from which they can launch attacks against the U.S. and denying its territory from being used by insurgents to destabilize its neighbors particularly Pakistan.<sup>1</sup> In order to accomplish these strategic objectives, the operational objectives designed to win the hearts and minds of the local populace must be achieved. Both the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF) led by the United States and the Taliban supported by Al Qaeda are in a fight for the support of the Afghan people. Only through marked progress in local security and transparency in government with economic growth will the people begin to genuinely side with the U.S. led Coalition.

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(All notes appear in shortened form. Page numbers omitted for most references accessed via the internet)

1. Biddle, "Defining Success in Afghanistan."

General David Petraeus, the NATO and U.S. Forces Commander in Afghanistan recently stated that “the Afghan people are the decisive Terrain.”<sup>2</sup> It is terrain that must be surmounted in order to achieve victory over the insurgency. General Stanley McChrystal, the head of ISAF until 04 July 2010, said that “efforts in Afghanistan are ultimately about changing the perceptions of people.”<sup>3</sup> As seen to date, this is a very difficult task that has required significant investments in manpower, funding, time, and adaptability to evolving scenarios. It is a task with few quantifiable metrics by which to measure progress and is something that requires perseverance, fortitude, and patience from the American people before being able to make an accurate assessment of its effectiveness.

To date, one of the primary ways to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people has been to provide them with basic security requirements. General McChrystal further stated that “the top strategic priority in Afghanistan is development of Afghan national security forces that ultimately will secure the country.”<sup>4</sup> He believed that the challenge was in gaining the trust of the non-combatants who, because of years of conflict under multiple regimes, tended to believe in quantifiable vice perceived results.<sup>5</sup> To gain this trust, the Afghan people typically need to feel secure in their homes, communities, and occupations. To provide this security, General Petraeus believes that ISAF forces must live among the people in order to build their confidence in a secure future.<sup>6</sup> As General McChrystal concluded, “only when they experience security from [insurgent] coercion, and only when

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2. Petraeus, “Future of Alliance and Mission in Afghanistan.”

3. Miles, “McChrystal, Eikenberry Afghanistan Strategy.”

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

6. Petraeus, “Setting-and Capitalizing on-Conditions for Progress.”

they benefit from better governance, will they begin to believe in the possibilities of the future."<sup>7</sup>

Winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan civilians has been a significant struggle and likely the most difficult of the operational objectives to attain. The cultural divide between American service members and the Afghan civilians is apparent in nearly every aspect of the conflict. From the highly advanced gear ensconcing each American service member to the exotic weaponry, the typical American combatant may be perceived as a futuristic war fighter intent on occupy their land. Although the presence of these service members is necessary to ensure security in the local communities, unintended intimidation may be perceived by a portion of the general population. It is important, as General Petraeus said to be a “student of history” and although additional forces are required to provide security for the Afghan civilians, how the forces are employed in the eyes of the Afghans will ultimately determine the outcome of the U.S. objectives.<sup>8</sup>

After decades of war spanning multiple regimes, the establishment of an acceptable form of government that is in line with U.S. objectives has proven to be a difficult task. There appear to be several possible outcomes to the construct of a representative form of government but, according to Stephen Biddle, a strong U.S. style of central governance may be unattainable.<sup>9</sup> He believes that there are many options of government that could eventually take root including “a centralized democracy, a decentralized democracy, a regulated mix of democratic and nondemocratic territories, a partitioned collection of

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7. Miles, “McChrystal, Eikenberry Afghanistan Strategy.”

8. Petraeus, “Setting-and Capitalizing on-Conditions for Progress.”

9. Biddle, “Defining Success in Afghanistan.”



ministates, an anarchy, or a centralized dictatorship.”<sup>10</sup> However, he goes on to say that a centralized democracy or a centralized dictatorship are unlikely while an anarchy or “partitioned collection of ministates” are unacceptable but, the likely combination of a “decentralized democracy and internal mixed sovereignty are both feasible and acceptable.”<sup>11</sup> Although not ideally what the U.S. originally envisaged, this form of government will ultimately meet U.S. objectives provided that it is transparent, governs fairly, promotes economic growth, and conducts itself in the best interest of the people.

### **PROGRAM CONCEPT**

The concept of the U.S. civilian mentorship program is relatively simple and intended to reduce the complexities of instating an acceptable form of government by focusing on the civil side of the civ-mil relationship. As previously mentioned, the overriding purpose of the program is to provide the Combatant Commander with an additional means to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. It is intended to afford those Afghan citizens intent on rebuilding their country with the additive benefit of witnessing a stable democracy and learning new ideas from their American counterpart. Funding for the program will not be discussed due to the multiple variables typically associated with financing new initiatives.

The program is broken down into three distinct phases. Phase 1 (selection and screening) begins with the selection and screening process of the volunteer Afghan candidates based on a series of scripted factors, medical and security prerequisites, and ends with the transportation of the participants from Afghanistan to a predetermined Aerial Port of Embarkation/Debarcation (APOE/D) in the U.S. Phase two (education) begins with formal instruction on U.S. civics, selected travel to U.S. economic and cultural centers, and segues

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10. Biddle, “Defining Success in Afghanistan.”

11. Ibid.

into the integration with the host U.S. family. The phase ends with the consolidation of participants at a prescribed U.S. APOE/D for transportation to Afghanistan. Phase 3 (reintegration, execution, and assessment) begins with the arrival of the participants at a predetermined APOE/D in Afghanistan for reintegration back into their respective communities. The phase ends with the continued execution of the participants' plans to positively influence the reconstruction and stability of their local community and government.

As previously stated Phase 1 would begin with the selection and screening process of the volunteer candidates. This is likely the most subjective phase of the program and requires a significant amount of scrutiny primarily because of the difficulty in determining the true intentions of the human psyche. Similar to the selection process of the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, candidate quotas would be determined based upon the ISAF commander's assessment of the operational progress within each of the 32 provinces.<sup>12</sup> Those requirements would then be sent to the Combatant Commander for approval. Selection teams placed in centralized locations throughout the provinces or regions would fall into or augment the existing civilian Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) and/or Intergovernmental Organizations (IGO) with security provided by either the military or contracted companies. The teams would consist of representatives well versed in the respective provincial and national demographics and have the ability, either individually or via interpreter, to converse in Dari or Pashto which are the acknowledged national languages representing 50% and 35% of the population respectively.<sup>13</sup> Interpreters fluent in any of the 30+ minor languages would be distributed as required. During this screening process, five

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12. CAPT Steve Senteio (Director Naval Command College), interview by author, 17 September 2010.

13. Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Fact Book."

primary areas would be evaluated to ensure that each candidate met the criterion to participate in the program. The evaluation areas would include but are not limited to an assessment of the individual's educational background, character, security eligibility, occupational influence, and medical eligibility.

First, candidates would be sought that possess a reasonable level of education. According to the Central Intelligence Agency World Fact Book, just 28.1% of the total Afghan population over the age of 15 is able to read and write; 43.1% are men and 12.6% are women.<sup>14</sup> Of this group, slightly over 4.5 million, the average time spent in the primary to tertiary grade levels is eight years with males completing 11 years of education while women complete just four years of education.<sup>15</sup> Ideally, the candidates would have a basic understanding of the English language although not a requirement. Because this program is not a dedicated academic program like the IMET program or Initiative to Educate Afghan Women (IEAW) that provides full college tuition for selected Afghan women candidates,<sup>16</sup> a lower level of English comprehension would be adequate provided that the participant could at least partially converse in the language. Although it is unknown how many Afghans comprehend the English language, desirable candidates could be taught basic phraseology provided they meet the screening requirements.

The second evaluation area would investigate the candidate's character. The program teams would actively seek candidates who display a high degree of loyalty to their country and who are fully committed to the promotion of stability and growth within their community. This is similar to the IEAW where the college graduates commit to returning to

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14. Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Fact Book."

15. Ibid.

16. Nirschel, "The Initiative to Educate Afghan Women."

Afghanistan upon graduation in order to assume leadership roles for “further reconstruction efforts and assist in improving the place of women in their society.”<sup>17</sup> Communal recommendations would be solicited in order to ascertain the candidate’s leadership qualities, reputation, reliability, and how that person is perceived among community members. Each eligible candidate would then be thoroughly interviewed and educated on the program’s functionality, goals, expectations, and end state.

Third, a thorough security screening would occur in order to determine if the candidate possesses undesirable motivations that could adversely affect the security of the U.S. and/or its citizens and ultimately undermine the program. Thorough background checks into available records would be conducted at the community, provincial, and national level to ensure that no history of criminal behavior, patterns of disloyalty, or sympathy for the insurgency exists. Potential ties to terrorist organizations including the Taliban would be thoroughly investigated along with any suspected efforts to subvert the U.S. and Coalition objectives in stabilizing the Afghan government and security efforts. Additionally, focus would be placed on past, present, and potential involvement in human rights violations. According to the Rawa News, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission documented 3700 human rights violations during 2007; many of which were against women and children.<sup>18</sup> Because human rights violations gain such high international notoriety, any possible connection with human rights breeches would likely disqualify the candidate in order to ensure that the U.S. civilian mentorship program is not perceived to be affiliated with or provide a conduit for atrocities against humanity.

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17. Nirschel, “The Initiative to Educate Afghan Women.”

18. Nadiri, “Human Rights Violation in Afghanistan.”

Fourth, the candidate's occupation would be examined to determine its communal influence and necessity. Legitimate occupations that tend to have the greatest positive influence on the local community and that promote ideals in line with U.S. interests would be sought. Occupational fields would include education, economics, agriculture, and law.

As eluded to earlier, Afghanistan's education system is significantly deficient due to decades of war. An estimated 30% of the more than 7,000 schools had sustained serious damage<sup>19</sup> prior to ISAF forces overthrowing the Taliban regime. However, significant efforts have been put into rebuilding schools primarily through U.S. initiatives and, in turn, have increased the requirement for educators. Similarly, Afghanistan's economic growth has averaged nearly 10% annually since the fall of the Taliban led primarily by the construction sector followed by improvements in health, education, microfinance, and public finance management.<sup>20</sup> Due to these improvements, those Afghans with financial or economic backgrounds would be considered for the program.

Most of Afghanistan's economy revolves around agriculture that consumes nearly 80% of the total work force.<sup>21</sup> However, Afghan farmers make little use of farm equipment, fertilizers, or pesticides<sup>22</sup> primarily because they have neither the ability to access it nor the economic means to acquire it. Irrigation systems are rudimentary at best consisting of antiquated methods for water distribution that rely almost exclusively upon gravity flow. With ongoing efforts to increase productivity and provide alternative crops to poppy as opium is the primary contributor to corruption,<sup>23</sup> Afghan farmers would be prime candidates

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19. New World Encyclopedia, "Afghanistan."

20. Heritage Foundation, "2010 Index of Economic Freedom."

21. New World Encyclopedia, "Afghanistan."

22. Ibid.

23. Heritage Foundation, "2010 Index of Economic Freedom."

for the program. Because the U.S. has a significant agrarian history, American methods and techniques could be shared with the intent of increasing alternative crop production.

Government corruption is viewed as “rampant”<sup>24</sup> and is the principle factor in the people’s distrust of the national and provincial governments. According to Transparency International’s 2008 Corruption Perceptions Index, Afghanistan ranks 176 of 179 countries in corruption.<sup>25</sup> This is primarily due to their underdeveloped judicial systems at the national and provincial levels that lack the ability to enforce property laws and effectively punish corruption charges. In contrast, most communities maintain a form of traditional shura council to ensure governance and accountability at the local level that would likely offer a “potential foundation for stable governance in the future.”<sup>26</sup> Although the Shuria law is different than the U.S. rule of law, observing the functionality of the U.S. justice system and its interoperability with law enforcement would provide the Afghan law participants with ideas on how to better compliment security forces at all levels.

The final evaluation area would focus on a thorough medical screening to ensure that each candidate is physically fit to participate in the program. This would include checking for potential communicable diseases with focus on but not limited to HIV, hepatitis A, malaria, and typhoid where the risk level for these infectious diseases is considered high.<sup>27</sup> A requisite series of inoculations that are in line with U.S. health promotion standards would then be administered.

At the completion of the selection and screening process, the selected participants would be transported to a predetermined APOE/D for manifest and transportation to the U.S.

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24. Heritage Foundation, “2010 Index of Economic Freedom.”

25. Transparency International, “Corruption Perceptions Index 2009.”

26. Biddle, “Defining Success in Afghanistan.”

27. Central Intelligence Agency, “The World Fact Book.”

Final coordination would be made with the Afghan government to ensure that the appropriate authorities were aware of the disposition of each participant and to ensure that proper permission was granted for the movement of each out of the country. Once authorized, participants would be transported from Afghanistan to a predetermined APOE/D within the U.S. signifying the completion of Phase 1.

Phase 2 begins with formal instruction on U.S. civics and is envisaged to last approximately ten days, similar to the IMET program, in order to present a positive first impression of America.<sup>28</sup> The instruction would be focused on familiarizing the participants with U.S. customs, traditions, and democratic government functionality. It would also provide cultural instruction regarding the multiple ethnic groups residing in the U.S. and their contributions to the American society. Depending upon the cross section of participant occupations, further training would be appropriated to demonstrate how those sectors of the U.S. economy function. Additionally, selected and escorted (interpreter as required) travel to U.S. economic and/or cultural centers specific to the participants' occupations would be provided in order to make evident the seasoned capabilities of a free market society. Similar to IMET, the training and travel would be intended to "show how the U.S works as a country" through the interoperability of the U.S. government with the military, the media/press, private sector industry, different cultures, and social institutions.<sup>29</sup>

At the completion of the familiarization training, the participants would meet and integrate with their U.S. mentorship hosts matched primarily by occupation. This step is the heart of the cultural exchange and would span approximately 30 days. Like the Afghan participants, the program would be solely voluntary for the American mentors. Because the

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28. Senteio, "Naval Command College Brief."

29. Ibid.

Afghan society considers marriage to be an obligation,<sup>30</sup> most Afghan participants would likely be married or closely tied to their families. Therefore, either volunteer American families or married couples vice single Americans would be sought in order to increase the commonalities among the different nationalities and foster greater cultural exchange. Furthermore, the hospitable atmosphere displayed by the U.S. host would also be important. As Iran continues the international information s operations campaign to brand the U.S. as the “Great Satan,” perceptions of such rhetoric could be undermined, albeit on a small scale, simply by the host family’s generosity and positive attitude toward its Afghan counterpart.

The intent would be for the Afghan participants to live with their American mentors and shadow them at their work centers for times conducive to both parties in order to promote “intellectual exchange”<sup>31</sup> and the “exchange of professional views.”<sup>32</sup> Similarly, the primary purpose would be to “impart skills and knowledge” that would assist the Afghan participants in creating new ideas to better utilize their existing resources.<sup>33</sup> The objectives of the U.S. hosts would be to present as many occupational methods as possible in order to provide the Afghans with additional options to rebuild and stabilize their communities. To make this most beneficial, the American hosts should be as familiar as possible with the Afghan culture and its significantly deficient structural and technological infrastructure. Ideas and recommendations should take this into consideration and be tailored to fit the reality of the Afghan’s actual communal capabilities. However, if execution of a far more efficient technique or method is deemed feasible with minor in-theater monetary assistance and support, both parties would document the requirements necessary for potential

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30. Countries and Their Cultures, “Afghanistan.”

31. Senteio, “Naval Command College Brief.”

32. Ibid.

33. Department of State, “IMET.”



implementation. The lessons learned from both parties would be consolidated and briefed to the program representatives at the APOE/D as part of the manifestation process for their return trip to Afghanistan.

Phase 3 begins with the arrival of the participants at a predetermined APOE/D in Afghanistan for reintegration back into their respective communities. This would be the most arduous and lengthy phase to implement simply because of the challenge in defining and evaluating realistic measures of effectiveness (MOE). Because MOE's are intended to "assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment,"<sup>34</sup> MOE's developed for the U.S. civilian mentorship program should be tailored to support the Combatant Commander's objectives. In defining MOE's for Afghanistan, the focus of the measures should be on the progress as it is perceived by the Afghan people. Anthony Cordesman suggests MOE's that would measure the 1) level of corruption or perceived corruption, 2) quality of law enforcement and prompt justice, and 3) perceptions of security with trend polling.<sup>35</sup> These are in line with potential MOE's that would be valid for measuring the program's effectiveness. Recommended MOE's specific to the program would include 1) resident support for the participant's initiatives (polling), 2) expeditious materiel and monetary support from all levels of government, 3) increases in the efficiency of the occupational sectors in the community, 4) stability within the community, and 5) trust in the local government; greater governmental transparency (polling). All proposed program MOE's would be presented to and approved by the Combatant Commander.

Much of the program's success is predicated upon how receptive the community would be to implementing the participant's new ideas. Much of this is based upon the

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34. CJCS, *Joint Operation Planning*, III-60.

35. Cordesman, "The New Metrics for Afghanistan."

participant's vitality and influential leadership to carry out and implement proposed changes beginning at the grass roots level. Requirements previously identified would need to be resourced expeditiously and to the greatest extent possible based upon pre-briefed implementation plans disseminated to and approved by government and ISAF authorities. Success would also be dependent upon the support provided by the Afghan government coupled with the in-theater mentorship teams in partnership with military forces. The goal would be to see positive, quantitative and qualitative results similar to those seen as a result of the IEAW program which have led to reduced infant mortality rates, increased quality of life for Afghan women, and have shown that "educated women have a direct influence on boys not joining the Taliban."<sup>36</sup>

Ideally, the personal relationships developed between the Afghan participants and their American counterparts would continue despite geographic separation. As seen through the IMET program, these relationships "have proven to provide U.S. access and influence in a critical sector of society that often plays a pivotal role in supporting, or transitioning to, democratic governments."<sup>37</sup> Since its inception in 1957, 13 foreign graduates of the U.S. Naval War College were promoted to the chiefs of their respective navies and two graduates that became the leader of their country: President Emile Lahoud of Lebanon and Prime Minister Prince „Ululkalala Lavaka Ata of Tonga.<sup>38</sup> Many of these countries continue to play a key role in the regional and economic stability of their respective hemisphere.

Similarly, according to Ann McDermott, Director of Admissions at Holy Cross University, graduates of the IEAW program remain in contact with their American

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36. Nirschel, "The Initiative to Educate Afghan Women."

37. Department of State, "IMET."

38. Senteio, "Naval Command College Brief."

classmates and maintain the relationships and cooperation generated during their education process in the U.S.<sup>39</sup> Since the inception of the IEAW in 2003, 36 Afghan women have graduated from colleges around the U.S.<sup>40</sup> and reintegrated back into their community with the intent of building a positive future for their country.

### **COUNTER-ARGUMENT**

One of the primary counter arguments against the establishment of a U.S. civilian mentorship program is that the security requirements for implementation on U.S. soil would be too great. The security referred to is the physical security that would be required to shadow the Afghan civilians while visiting their host families in America. Much of this concern has evolved from the recent events in Texas where 17 members of the Afghan military deserted the Defense Language Institute (DLI) at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas between 2009 and 2010.<sup>41</sup>

According to Fox News, the Afghans were studying the English language as part of the DLI program designed to teach English to select military pilot candidates and other air force personnel from allied countries.<sup>42</sup> U.S. military concerns heightened primarily because each Afghan student was given a military identification card providing them access to most U.S. military bases around the country. Once the story broke during the summer 2010, a nationwide alert was issued to heighten the awareness of U.S. citizens and law enforcement agencies.<sup>43</sup> The Department of Defense is currently in the process of investigating how this occurred in order to prevent future breeches in security.

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39. Ann McDermott (Director of Admissions, Holy Cross University), telephone interview with author, 18 October 2010.

40. Nirschel, "The Initiative to Educate Afghan Women."

41. Winter, "17 Afghan Military Members AWOL."

42. Ibid

43. Ibid.

Additionally, according to a subsequent Fox News report, over 3400 students from the international community were enrolled in training at DLI during 2009. Of those, 228 were from Afghanistan.<sup>44</sup> Since 2002, 46 Afghans military members training at DLI have deserted their representative armed forces.<sup>45</sup> Nearly half of those are believed to have found refuge in Canada assisted using a complex network designed to smuggle the deserters to sanctuaries throughout the U.S. This network consists of naturalized and illegal Mexican women, previous Afghan deserters from DLI, and Iranians tied to the physical transportation and movement of the deserters north from the U.S. into Canada.<sup>46</sup> To date, an undisclosed number of the original 17 have been apprehended.<sup>47</sup>

This issue has naturally increased the angst of the American people and has drawn attention to potential gaps in the current security system that could reduce support for the implementation of a U.S. civilian mentorship program. To lessen this concern, a thorough in-theater candidate screening and selection process coupled with inter-government agency oversight would be necessary for the program to be successful. Coordination between the Departments of State and Justice in concert with the local and state authorities would be required to marginalize the security concerns among Americans and those of the volunteer U.S. host families by providing adequate security oversight.

The scope and size of the security requirement would be largely based on the demographics from which the Afghan participants are chosen. Because the program focuses on influential occupational demographics of volunteers genuinely dedicated to the reconstruction of their country, reasonable assurance exists that the Afghans would return to

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44. Winter, "17 Afghan Military Members AWOL."

45. Winter, "Sophisticated Network Helps AWOL Afghans."

46. Ibid.

47. Winter, "17 Afghan Military Members AWOL."

their country upon program completion. Therefore, the goal is to establish security by proxy. This means that the U.S. state and local authorities would be notified by the appropriate U.S. governmental agency of the presence, location, and duration of stay of the Afghan participants once they arrived in the host U.S. community omitting the need for constant surveillance.

### **CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS**

In conclusion, implementation of a U.S. civilian mentorship program has the potential to be successful and assist the Combatant Commander with stabilizing Afghanistan and defeating the insurgency. However, homeland security concerns would have to be thoroughly addressed and coordinated with local, state, and federal authorities in order to ease the angst of much of the American populace.

As previously stated, the program is not intended to provide any form of citizenship or asylum for Afghan participants. The purpose of the program is to provide the participants with new ideas to improve their locality once they reintegrate back into their community. It would also provide them with the ability to witness a stable, democratic society and the interoperability of the many occupational sectors that comprise the U.S. economy. Whether through education, economics, agriculture, or law, the personal integration would provide the conduit to bridge commonalities among the different societies and develop an appreciation and understanding of the other's culture and traditions.

Furthermore, the program would support the Combatant Commander in his effort to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people. Although the scope of the program is relatively small compared to the mass undertakings already in place, its purpose of providing influential Afghan community leaders with new techniques and ideas to improve their society

is a method that has yet to be attempted in the fashion described in this document. The success of IMET on the military side along with the success of the IEAW on the civilian side shows that cultural exchange on U.S. soil is very beneficial. Coupled with these two programs, the U.S. mentorship program would complement them through the education of a similar audience aimed at accomplishing the same objective.

Although the near term effectiveness of the program would be difficult to ascertain, long term benefits would ultimately be measured by resilient community stability supported by a sound representative and transparent provincial and national government. From the grass roots level, the dedication of the Afghan participants to influence positive change within their communities would have to be met with local and provincial support in order for new methods and ideas to be effectively implemented and executed.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Consideration should be given to exploring the possibility of establishing similar programs in other U.S. partner nations. The focus would be to work with those nations that have regional interest in the stability of Afghanistan. Some of these partners may include Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, and possibly Morocco although Morocco is outside of the immediate Middle-East region. These countries are predominately Muslim with some form of governmental republic, parliamentary democracy, or constitutional monarchy<sup>48</sup> and have similar value systems. Additionally, they would likely have a combination of language, regional, and environmental commonalities. The program may prove just as effective if established in these or similar nations due to the predominance of agrarian cultures in each and the commonality in their religious beliefs.

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48. Central Intelligence Agency, "The World Fact Book."

RECOMMENDATION 2: A pilot program would determine if the U.S. civilian mentorship program concept is feasible. The pilot program would focus on a limited number of Afghan volunteers and would use the program concept described in this document as a general guide for the initial trial. The construct of the pilot team would include members well versed on the Afghan culture and members who could effectively coordinate with the U.S. and Afghan governments, ISAF forces, IGO's, and similar NGO's. All team members should be fully dedicated to the success of the program and understand that their goal is to assist the Combatant Commander in accomplishing the operational objectives aimed at the winning the hearts and minds of the Afghan people.

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